



LINCOLN CHAFEE

U.S. SENATOR

RHODE ISLAND

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CHAFEE STATEMENT ON DRILLING IN THE ARTIC NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

Senate Fails to Invoke Cloture on DOD Appropriations Bill

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, **U.S. Senator Lincoln Chafee (R-RI)** reacted to the inclusion of a provision calling for the drilling the Artic National Wildlife Refuge in the fiscal year 2006 Department of Defense appropriations bill Conference Report.

The provision was inserted by a Conference Committee, consisting of members of the House of Representatives and the Senate, who were appointed to iron out the differences between the respective versions of the appropriations bill. Neither original version of the bill contained this controversial language calling for drilling in the Refuge.

“While the Department of Defense appropriations bill provides funding for many important defense related projects, all of which I am in strong and continuing support, the decision at the eleventh hour by the conference committee to include legislation allowing oil and gas drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is inappropriate, as this provision is so clearly outside of the scope of the defense bill.

A bill which provides critical funding for hundreds of thousands of American troops should not be subject to provisions which are not germane to this purpose, such as drilling for oil. Compromising a matter of such importance with the inclusion of one controversial provision is not the way business should be conducted in the U.S. Senate.

I am pleased many of my colleagues have recognized that this action is an improper use of the power bestowed upon the conferees, and I hope steps will be taken to remove this language from the bill, ensuring its swift passage.”

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